

# MESSAGE MINDER

November 5, 2017

“... BE STRONG  
AND  
COURAGEOUS  
AND DO IT. DO  
NOT BE AFRAID  
AND DO NOT BE  
DISMAYED...”

1 CHRONICLES  
28:20\*



## A FATHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT

By Chris Schelich

The blueprints were finished. Finally, after hours of pouring over the possible flaws and structural issues, the first brick was laid. It wasn't easy. There were times of scarcity and times of plenty, yet the expert continued. This *magnum opus* was destined to be something more. As time passed, the structure grew. Windows began to form while towers elongated their shadows. And, with the last brick placed, the master stood back in awe. She was baffled by the beauty of her creation. Her tower was complete!

If you've ever worked with children, you know that Legos are first and foremost designed to strike at the foot of any and every adult; you also know that these little bricks have an amazing power to summon forth the imagination of a child in order to break the mold setup in the instructions and loose their creative genius into the world.

We are creative beings. In dirt, we make mud pies; in snow, forts. We utilize the very elements around us and form them into something new and expressive daily.

We craft tools and make shelters that are not only built for survival, but that also serve an aesthetic feature as we look upon them and say, "That is beautiful!"

But, as is frequently attributed to everyone's favorite Uncle Ben Parker from the Amazing Spiderman comics, "With great power comes great responsibility." And this responsibility can easily be manipulated.

One of the most manipulative forces in human civilization is anxiety. The Israelites fell victim to this weakness at the base of Mt. Sinai. Utilizing a commodity such as gold, they fashioned an idol in an attempt to "purchase" security beneath God's presence because they succumbed to anxiety. In fear, they utilized their creative prowess to craft an idol that they believed would rectify the problem and deliver them.

The Israelites were coerced into giving their goods, their funds, and their creative prowess toward the powers of sin for the sake of perceived security.

It is with this story in mind that we must approach 1 Chronicles 29:1-25 as we examine how David summons the people to pour into the creative effort of God's temple. Whether David realized it or not, humanity's role in the building of the temple serves as a reminder that God partners with us in the creative process!

God chose not to divinely craft the entire temple and place it into the world with His own hands, but rather to use the innate creative power in humanity and partner with it to create a place amongst His people to dwell.

The opportunity set before David and Solomon was daunting. David had listened to God and received a plan, but the materials were not all accounted for. From the perspective of a father's love, we can then read 1 Chronicles 28:20-21.

David summons a phrase that consistently harkens back to days past, "Be strong and courageous..." But, it is with expectant passion that the father also prays, "...and do it. Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed, for the LORD God, even my God, is with you.

He will not leave you or forsake you, until all the work for the service of the house of the LORD is finished."

Church, do not be afraid or dismayed. Do not let the power or principality of anxiety inhibit us from completing the the work that is ahead of us. God has offered us a chance to participate in His Kingdom by developing and building a facility that will extend grace and mercy to even the outermost fringes of our society.

References:

Walter Brueggemann, *Sabbath as Resistance: Saying No to a Culture of Now* (2014).

Stan Lee & Steve Ditko, *Amazing Fantasy* (vol. 1, no. 15), August, 1962.

\*All scriptural citations utilize the ESV.

## DISCUSSION & REFLECTION

- 1.) Have you ever been inhibited from completing something due to anxiety? How did you manage the deadline and/or overcome the issue?
- 2.) Money and finances are sensitive subjects in America. People don't like talking about them, but that shouldn't mean we let it hide in darkness. If you were to look through your checkbook, can you identify anything that takes your time and finances and inhibits your ability to be obedient to God? What is it and what changes do you need to make?
- 3.) Find a common place to post 1 Chronicles 28:20 around your home. Allow it to serve as a reminder to what God is currently partnering with Westmore to do. Find a way to tap into this every time a tithe or offering is given and remind yourself to be obedient in all of this!

